

## Problematizing Muslim Women's Leadership in Indonesia through the Ecofeminism Perspective

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DOI : <http://dx.doi.org/10.30983/it.v6i1.5537>

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|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Submission: 14 May 2022 | Revised: 18 June 2022 | Published: 30 June 2022 |
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### Abstract

This paper aims to problematize the leadership of Muslim women in Indonesia. By using the critical theory of hegemony from Antonio Gramsci and ecofeminism, this paper attempts to re-questioning the leadership of Muslim women, especially in Indonesia. This paper finds that the problem of Muslim women's leadership in Indonesia is inseparable from a patriarchal perspective that sees women as much lower than men. This patriarchal perspective also has implications for the way humans see nature, that nature is lower than humans just as women are seen as inferior to men so they can be exploited. This paper uses a qualitative research methodology that relies on the literature related to the research questions. The discussion of this paper begins with the theory of hegemony and ecofeminism, then problematize the relationship between women and men in leadership, especially from an Islamic perspective, and analyzes it from an ecofeminism perspective. This paper shows that the leadership of Muslim women in Indonesia still faces many challenges, especially the patriarchal perspective which sees women as inferior to men as well as nature is considered inferior to humans.

**Keywords:** Muslim Women's Leadership, Ecofeminism, Islam in Indonesia.

### Abstrak

Makalah ini bertujuan untuk mempersoalkan kepemimpinan perempuan Muslim di Indonesia. Dengan menggunakan teori kritis hegemoni dari Antonio Gramsci dan ekofeminisme, makalah ini mencoba mempertanyakan kembali kepemimpinan perempuan Muslim, khususnya di Indonesia. Makalah ini menemukan bahwa masalah kepemimpinan perempuan Muslim di Indonesia tidak terlepas dari cara pandang patriarki yang melihat perempuan jauh lebih rendah daripada laki-laki. Cara pandang patriarki ini juga berimplikasi pada cara manusia memandang alam, bahwa alam lebih rendah dari manusia seperti halnya perempuan dipandang lebih rendah dari laki-laki sehingga dapat dieksploitasi. Makalah ini menggunakan metodologi penelitian kualitatif yang mengandalkan literatur yang terkait dengan pertanyaan penelitian. Pembahasan tulisan ini diawali dengan teori hegemoni dan ekofeminisme, kemudian mempersoalkan hubungan antara perempuan dan laki-laki dalam kepemimpinan, khususnya dari perspektif Islam, dan menganalisisnya dari perspektif ekofeminisme. Makalah ini menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan perempuan Muslim di Indonesia masih menghadapi banyak tantangan, terutama perspektif patriarki yang melihat perempuan lebih rendah dari laki-laki serta alam dianggap lebih rendah dari manusia.

**Kata Kunci:** Kepemimpinan Perempuan Muslim, Ekofeminisme, Islam di Indonesia.

### Background

Gender discourse began to be developed in Indonesia in the 1980s, however, the discourse began to enter religious issues in the 1990s. It can be said that during the last 10 or 5 years, the development of gender issues has become very

rapid and very productive, much faster than other issues, such as the issue of pluralism, which is equally important.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Muhammad Shofan, *Jalan Ketiga Pemikiran Islam: Mencari Solusi Pendekatan Tradisionalisme Dan*

Gender differences are actually not a problem, as long as they do not cause injustice to women and men. However, in reality, according to Mansour Fakih, gender differences have created what is called injustice, especially against women. Gender inequality, according to him, is a system or social structure in which men or women are victims. This injustice is manifested in the form of marginalization, the process of economic impoverishment, subordination or the assumption that it is not necessary to participate in making or in making political decisions, stereotypes, discrimination, and violence.<sup>2</sup>

Based on the leadership system adopted by using the Indonesian state so far, this has resulted in the low stage of women's participation in political forums which has resulted in the various pursuits of women being much less accommodated in a number of political decisions, because a number of decisions made tend to be masculine and the absence of a gender perspective. Meanwhile, for the most component, in line with Very Wahyudi, the political decisions given regularly involve women as targets.<sup>3</sup>

The regulation related to the 30% quota for women's representation that aims to increase the number of women sitting in the legislature has been regulated in several laws related to elections, even when compared to several previous elections, the laws and regulations governing this in the 2014 elections more and more detail. However, the number of women who eventually became Members of the Indonesian House of Representatives in the 2014-2019 period actually decreased from 101 people or 17.86% to only 79 people or 14% of the total 560 elected members.

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*Liberalisme* (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2006), 275. Andik Wahyun Muqoyyidin, "Wacana Kesetaraan Gender: Pemikiran Islam Kontemporer Tentang Gerakan Feminisme Islam", *Al-Ulum* 13, no. 2 (2013): 492.

<sup>2</sup>Mansour Fakih, *Analisis Gender Dan Transformasi Sosial* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1997), 23.

<sup>3</sup>Very Wahyudi, "Peran Politik Dalam Perspektif Gender", *Politea: Jurnal Politik Islam* 1, no. 1 (2018): 64.

This needs to be examined critically, because the results obtained are inversely proportional to the level of legislative nominations against women which experienced an increase in the 2014 elections.<sup>4</sup>

A number of these political facts seem to be closely related to the understanding of the general public (*mainstream*). It is not impossible if there are some people who think that the involvement of women in political activities is a serious violation of religious norms and will cause harm to many people. This happens because of the strong assumptions of the existing society, where the division of roles has been clearly divided, men in the public sphere, while women in the domestic sphere. If there are women who come out of this stratification, it will give birth to an assessment that is pejorative (degrading).<sup>5</sup> Therefore, the author attempts to describe the problems related to women's leadership from the point of view of Islam in Indonesia which is reviewed based on the ecofeminism aspect.

The type of research in this paper is library research using various references, such as books, journals, websites, and etc. The approach used in this study is a feminist approach where this approach tends to discuss gender issues, especially for women who sometimes get discriminatory attitudes, both in the domestic and public spheres, one of which is the realm of leadership. Another approach used is a philosophical approach which then looks at the issue of Islamic women's leadership in Indonesia in terms of values or ethics, this is reflected in the aspect or review of ecofeminism which is one of the schools of philosophy. This paper also uses a historical approach in an effort to see historical developments relating to the leadership of Muslim

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<sup>4</sup>Very Wahyudi, "Peran Politik dalam Perspektif Gender", 64.

<sup>5</sup>Muhadjir Muhammad Darwin and Tukiran, eds., *Menggugat Budaya Patriarki* (Yogyakarta: UGM Press, 2001), 24. M Syaeful Bahar, "Pembatasan Kepemimpinan Perempuan (Kritik Terhadap Hadist Misoginis)", *Muwâzâb* 1, no. 2 (2009): 127-128.

women who were in the past to be compared with today's problems.

The data from this paper is collected by means of documentation, namely based on documents that are considered relevant in discussing the issue of Muslim women's leadership in Indonesia. This paper is also analyzed by means of content analysis, critical discourse analysis, deductive, and inductive. The content analysis was carried out with the purpose of reading numerous references based on their essence. Critical discourse analysis is used to research discourses related to the leadership of Muslim women in Indonesia. Deductive and inductive analysis methods are methods that seek to obtain data through searching at the beginning and the end of the data which can be used as a specific conclusion.

### **Hegemony and Ecofeminism: Theoretical Framework**

The theory used in this paper is the theory of hegemony which is an idea centered on Antonio Gramsci's understanding that hegemony is seen as a cultural and ideological means of dominant group places in society, including basically, but not exclusively the ruling class, but preserves its dominance by securing the "spontaneous consent" of subordinate groups, including the working class, through the creation of a negotiated political and ideological consensus that infiltrates both dominant and dominated groups.<sup>6</sup>

Then, another theory is the theory of ecofeminism. The theory of ecofeminism originated from the emergence of environmental conservation movements that are rife in the West, such as the destruction of human ecosystems<sup>7</sup> by

focusing more on nature (ecology).<sup>8</sup> However, on a practical level, there is a prediction that there are injustices experienced by women in society. Injustice to women in this environment departs first from the notion of injustice committed by humans against non-Muslims and nature. Because women are always associated with nature, conceptually, symbolically and linguistically there is a link between feminist and ecological issues.<sup>9</sup> According to Karen J. Warren, a female philosopher who argues about ecofeminism, said that ecofeminism is not only criticizing the domination of men and women and nature, but also touching all aspects. Ecofeminism exists for global development<sup>10</sup> that is built not only on the relationship between women and nature, but also more complexly, namely for understanding women, nature, race, and others.<sup>11</sup>

### **The Relationship between Men and Women in Leadership: An Islamic Perspective**

The issue of women's leadership in Islam has become a very comprehensive discussion of the discourses that are built for women. In the context of the relationship between men and women, there are two areas of roles that are faced, namely the public role or the public sector with the domestic role or the domestic sector. The first term is assumed to be the area of self-actualization of men, while the second is considered to be the world of women. This cultural barrier, according to feminists, is a cultural heritage from primitive society that places men as hunters and women as gatherers.

This legacy is then passed on by an agrarian society which places men outside the home (public sphere) to manage agriculture and women in the home (domestic sphere) to take care of the family.

<sup>6</sup>Dominic Strinati, *Popular Culture: Pengantar Menuju Teori Budaya Populer* (Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media, 2010), 254.

<sup>7</sup>Tim Penulis PSW, *Pengantar Studi Gender* (Jakarta: Pusat Studi Wanita [PSW], 2003), 111. Siti Fahimah, "Ekofeminisme: Teori Dan Gerakan", *Alamara: Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Penyiaran Islam* 1, no. 1 (2017): 11.

<sup>8</sup>Gadis Arivia, *Filsafat Berperspektif Feminis* (Jakarta: Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan, 2003), 144. Siti Fahimah, "Ekofeminisme: Teori Dan Gerakan", 11.

<sup>9</sup>Siti Fahimah, "Ekofeminisme: Teori Dan Gerakan", 11.

<sup>10</sup>Gadis Arivia, *Filsafat Berperspektif Feminis*, 144. Siti Fahimah, "Ekofeminisme: Teori Dan Gerakan", 12.

<sup>11</sup>Chris J. Cuomo, *Feminism and Ecological Communities; an Ethic of Flourishing* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 36. Siti Fahimah, "Ekofeminisme: Teori Dan Gerakan", 12.

Likewise, in modern society, these cultural barriers still tend to be accommodated, especially in the capitalist system. In fact, the division of labor based on sex like this is not only detrimental to women themselves,<sup>12</sup> but also very irrelevant to be applied in this modern era of science and technology.<sup>13</sup>

The difference in roles between men and women in society in general can be categorized into two broad categories: First, the theory of nature, which states that the different roles of men and women are determined by biological factors. According to this theory, a series of biological differences between men and women are the main factors in determining the social roles of the two sexes. Second, the theory of nurture, which reveals that differences in social roles are more determined by cultural factors. According to this theory, the division of roles of men and women in society is not determined by biological factors, but is constructed by the culture of society.<sup>14</sup>

The context related to the relationship between men and women can be seen with the theory of the difference between text and reality (contrasting between text and reality) and the theory of the difference between values and reality (contrasting between values and reality). These theories are used to examine the extent to which gender-just texts and values are applied in the reality of society so that the dynamics of roles and relationships between men and women can be seen. However, looking at the public role of women, in historical and cultural trajectories, the sexual division of labor is always found, so Michelle Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere identify it based on universal characteristics in various cultural groups,<sup>15</sup>

but the sexual division of labor still perpetuates male domination. male to female.<sup>16</sup>

Scientific and cultural understanding of the gender differences has led to a long debate, including among theologians and feminists. They play an important role in this discourse, because their interpretations of the scriptures refer to the objective conditions of the society in which they live. Not a few of their interpretations that justify the construction of culture that lives in society. On the other hand, not a few of the cultural constructions are built on understanding the scriptures, for example the Koran's perception of three main things about women.<sup>17</sup>

*First*, the purpose of the creation of women to complete the needs of men (Adam) in Heaven. This kind of understanding suggests that women are only complements and created to serve the needs of men. *Second*, woman was created from the rib of man. This kind of analysis impresses subordinate women. *Third*, women are the cause of the fall of man from heaven to earth. This impresses women as the cause of inherited sin. These three understandings form a perception that settles in the consciousness of the community, so that they see that women do not deserve to be equated with men.<sup>18</sup>

Based on this, the concept of gender (relationship between men and women) in Islam is still a debate among Muslims. Some people think that gender in Islam is not a problem, and some think there is a problem, and that it is time to challenge the status quo view of gender.<sup>19</sup> If you look closely, the root of their difference of opinion

<sup>12</sup>Mansour Fakih, *Analisis Gender Dan Transformasi Sosial*, 72–75. Achmad Mulyadi, “Relasi Laki-Laki Dan Perempuan (Menabrak Tafsir Teks, Menakar Realitas)”, *AL-IHKAM: Jurnal Hukum & Pranata Sosial* 7, no. 2 (2014): 52.

<sup>13</sup>Waryono Abdul Ghafur and Muhammad Isnanto, eds., *Gender Dan Islam: Teks Dan Konteks* (Yogyakarta: PSW UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2009), 5–7. Achmad Mulyadi, “Relasi Laki-Laki Dan Perempuan (Menabrak Tafsir Teks, Menakar Realitas)”, 52.

<sup>14</sup>Nasaruddin Umar, *Argumen Kesetaraan Jender: Perspektif Alquran* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1999), 4–7. Achmad Mulyadi, “Relasi Laki-Laki Dan Perempuan (Menabrak Tafsir Teks, Menakar Realitas)”, hal. 53.

<sup>15</sup>Mansour Fakih, *Analisis Gender Dan Transformasi Sosial*, 80–84. Achmad Mulyadi, “Relasi

Laki-Laki Dan Perempuan (Menabrak Tafsir Teks, Menakar Realitas)”, 54.

<sup>16</sup>Achmad Mulyadi, “Relasi Laki-Laki Dan Perempuan (Menabrak Tafsir Teks, Menakar Realitas)”, 54.

<sup>17</sup>Nasaruddin Umar, *Argumen Kesetaraan Jender: Perspektif Alquran*, 4–7. Achmad Mulyadi, “Relasi Laki-Laki Dan Perempuan (Menabrak Tafsir Teks, Menakar Realitas)”, 54–55.

<sup>18</sup>Waryono Abdul Ghafur and Muhammad Isnanto, eds., *Gender Dan Islam: Teks Dan Konteks*, 6. Achmad Mulyadi, “Relasi Laki-Laki Dan Perempuan (Menabrak Tafsir Teks, Menakar Realitas)”, 55.

<sup>19</sup>Kadariusman, *Agama, Relasi Gender, Dan Feminisme* (Yogyakarta: Kreasi Wacana, 2005), 4–5. Achmad Mulyadi, “Relasi Laki-Laki Dan Perempuan (Menabrak Tafsir Teks, Menakar Realitas)”, 55.

actually lies in the problem of verse interpretation. Therefore, the crucial issue that needs to be studied is to consider the “Islamic” perspective of the two opinions.<sup>20</sup>

### Ecofeminism Analysis of Muslim Women’s Leadership in Indonesia

Based on the verses in the Qur’an that talk about the relationship between women and men, they can be grouped into eight, including the following:

1. General statement on the equality of women and men (Q.S. 2:187, Q.S. 2:228)
2. Equality of the origin (Q.S. 4:1, Q.S. 49:13)
3. Equality of aural rewards (Q.S. 3:195, Q.S. 4:32, Q.S. 9:72)
4. Equality to love and love one another (Q.S. 17:24, Q.S. 30:21, Q.S. 46:15)
5. Justice and equality (Q.S. 2:228, Q.S. 16:97)
6. Equality in social security (Q.S. 2:177)
7. Help each other (Q.S. 9:71)
8. Opportunities for education (Q.S. 8:11, Q.S. 39:9)<sup>21</sup>

The verses of the Qur’an, very clearly state that the relationship between men and women is a relationship as equal partners in various ways. It has become out of place, when women are required to follow and play a role, as in the past. In fact, there has been a change in a very different time and place. Thus, there is no doubt that there is a push towards equality between men and women in the Qur’an, that the Qur’an gives an honorable place to all human beings who include two genders, namely men and women. Biological differences do not mean creating inequalities in life. Biological functions must be distinguished from social functions.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup>Achmad Mulyadi, “Relasi Laki-Laki Dan Perempuan (Menabrak Tafsir Teks, Menakar Realitas)”, 55–56.

<sup>21</sup>Khoirudin Nasution, *Fazlur Rahman Tentang Wanita* (Yogyakarta: Tazzafa, 2002), 22. Ida Novianti, “Dilema Kepemimpinan Perempuan Dalam Islam,” *Yin Yang: Studi Gender Dan Anak* 3, no. 2 (2008): 257.

<sup>22</sup>Asgar Ali Engineer, *Hak-Hak Perempuan Dalam Islam* (Yogyakarta: LP3ES, 1994), 59. Ida

Based on the leadership aspect, the values that are considered the most dominant are personality qualities which include ability, capacity, faculty, and skill. Leadership is closely related to politics, in this case, women have the same political rights as men. Women’s political rights mean having the right to have an opinion, the right to be a member of a representative institution, and the right to gain true power over something, such as leading formal institutions, organizations, parties, and the state.<sup>23</sup>

However, the patriarchal system has almost penetrated all dimensions of life, including the world of politics. This field is even considered a field that is very thick with its patriarchal nature. The word patriarchy is defined as a system filled with male authority who oppresses women. One form of oppression is the tendency to discriminate against other genders. Men are given greater access than women, both in political, social and economic institutions.<sup>24</sup> In accordance with this definition, so far, the world of politics is considered as the world of men with all the characteristics inherent in it, such as hard, full of intrigue, competition, and others. In fact, politics is equated with men.

Men dominate the political world, not only as a gender, but also as a mainstream. In other words, patriarchy does not only mean the hegemony of men as gender, but also men as the mainstream; cultural currents; currents of custom or habit; or speed current. Women as "victims" of the patriarchal system feel the effects, such as being treated in a discriminatory manner in which women are belittled, considered incompetent, restricted, and so on. Women have a long experience of the patriarchal system that takes place

Novianti, “Dilema Kepemimpinan Perempuan Dalam Islam”, 257.

<sup>23</sup>Zaetunah Subhan, *Perempuan Dan Politik Dalam Islam* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2006), 39. Ida Novianti, “Dilema Kepemimpinan Perempuan Dalam Islam”, 258.

<sup>24</sup>Maggie Humm, *Ensiklopedia Feminisme*, trans. Mundi Rahayu (Yogyakarta: Fajar Pustaka Baru, 2002), 332–335. Fatrawati Kumari, “Perempuan Islam Dalam Politik (Analisis Filsafat Ekofeminisme)”, *Mu’adalah: Jurnal Studi Gender Dan Anak* 2, no. 1 (2014): 84.

culturally and structurally, from pre-Islamic, post-Islamic, to the present.<sup>25</sup>

All patriarchal experiences have been deeply rooted and become an inseparable part of women, so that, when women have the opportunity to lead, whether they realize it or not, women use patriarchal methods that are masculine in their leadership. Women become very masculine when they become a leader in government, because masculinity has become a "current" or "trend" that moves anyone who sits as a leader. Radhiyyah for example, after serving as *Sultanah*, she followed the tradition of male leaders by doing the following things. *First*, pinning titles for himself, Radhiyyah ad-Dunya wa ad-Din (who is blessed in this world and religion or the hereafter) and Balqis Jihan (the Arabic name of the Queen of Saba' and the title of Arab nobility). *Second*, perpetuating his power by printing currency with the inscription, "The Pillars of Women, Queen of All Ages, Sultanah Radhiyyah bint Shams ad-Din Iltutmisy".<sup>26</sup>

The masculine style shown by Radhiyyah next was to open her face, shorten her hair, ride a horse, and dress in military complete with weaponry (bows and arrows). Radhiyyah dressed like a man with the hope of becoming a strong leader, as was the expectation of society at that time. In addition, Radhiyyah herself is recognized by history as a female leader who has good ingenuity, firmness, courage, valor, skill, and authority. Radhiyyah also ended his power masculine too, namely because he lost the battle.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup>Mansour Fakih, *Analisis Gender Dan Transformasi Sosial*, 160–167. See also Henrietta L. Moore, *Feminism and Anthropology* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), 8. Fatrawati Kumari, "Perempuan Islam Dalam Politik (Analisis Filsafat Ekofeminisme)", 84.

<sup>26</sup>Fatima Mernissi provides a total depiction of Radhiyyah in leading religion. See Fatima Mernissi, *Ratu-Ratu Islam Yang Terlupakan*, trans. Rahmani Astuti and Enna Hadi (Bandung: Mizan, 1994), 24–25, 141, 143. Fatrawati Kumari, "Perempuan Islam Dalam Politik (Analisis Filsafat Ekofeminisme)", 84.

<sup>27</sup>Fatima Mernissi, *Ratu-Ratu Islam Yang Terlupakan*, 141, 143. Fatrawati Kumari, "Perempuan Islam Dalam Politik (Analisis Filsafat Ekofeminisme)", 84–85.

The emergence of the use of the term "image" in leadership (politics) in Indonesia is one way to perpetuate power which is directly proportional to the mechanism of desire as the driving engine. The desire that shapes and organizes is then formed based on the wishes and desires of the image builder. Likewise with the image built by a political party based on the political machine it has, the desire for power is an important agenda that must be realized.

The politics (leadership) of such an image has penetrated the spaces that have been created with the initial conditions as a neutral space for community activities and free from political aspects. Spaces that are free from pretensions and interests of individuals and groups of people other than the fulfillment of their outer and inner interests as social beings. Based on this context, Easton states that politics is an understandable formidable force.<sup>28</sup>

Political image can also be observed from the reality of democracy as a pillar of the political system adopted by various countries in the world, including Indonesia. Piliang views that democracy consists of two aspects, namely democracy as the reality of everyday social life and democracy which is represented as an image in various information media.<sup>29</sup>

Piliang even looks further, he sees when democracy has really been cut off from the real reality of a democratic state which is defined as post-democracy, where democracy presents itself at the image level as an icon of democracy. A political party is depicted through images as a party that is truly tolerant of the various differences that exist, even though what is shown is far from the actual reality. The thing that is worried about post-democracy is that when the concepts of

<sup>28</sup>Nila Sastrawati, *Laki-Laki Dan Perempuan Identitas Yang Berbeda: Analisis Gender Dan Politik Perspektif Post-Feminisme* (Makassar: Alauddin Press, 2018), 94.

<sup>29</sup>Yasraf Amir Piliang, *Postrealitas: Realitas Kebudayaan Dalam Era Post-Metafisika* (Jakarta: Jalasutra, 2004). Nila Sastrawati, *Laki-Laki Dan Perempuan Identitas Yang Berbeda: Analisis Gender Dan Politik Perspektif Post-Feminisme*, 94.

democracy, namely freedom (assembly, association, voice), human rights, equality, and pluralism through the principles of democracy itself, then freedom will lead to absolute freedom. evolve toward relativism, and human rights will lead to anything being permissible.

The sustainability of the democratic system so as not to be dragged into post-democracy with the risks it carries, is largely determined by the power of control (government) and management (management) in society. If these two forces are not present, disorder and uncertainty will be formed, so that it will be controlled by various movements of social turbulence with one of the consequences of which is a political discourse that develops without direction.<sup>30</sup>

Based on this system, the emergence of problems, such as the low representation of women, lack of capacity, and the lack of integrity of women as legislators, indicates that Indonesian women have not yet become feminine figures. Indonesian women in these institutions actually show their masculinity by voluntarily accepting the existing system. Consciously or not, they become permissive and dissolve in the patriarchal system game.<sup>31</sup>

As is well known, the task of members of parliament is to hear and voice the aspirations of the people, then fight for and put them in the form of rules or legislation, however, this is not always the case. Not a few of the women parliamentarians who do not understand their duties and responsibilities as representatives of the people and women's representatives. Unfortunately, they leave this ignorance until the end of their term of office, so that it can be said, they have become agents of

masculinity that harm the interests of women in particular and society in general.<sup>32</sup>

Based on this fact, women who have occupied important positions, both in the executive, legislative, judicial, and other institutions, have become "male clones". Gender is indeed female, but consciously, it is more similar to male. One of the Indonesian Muslim feminists, Ratna Megawangi, clearly stated:

*What happens after women enter a masculine world that was previously dominated by men? In fact, women no longer emphasize their feminine qualities, but instead become male clones and fall into the trap of a hierarchical masculine system.*<sup>33</sup>

Masculinity has gripped firmly into all systems of life, even women themselves have become part of the masculine system that has been complaining and criticizing themselves. How is it possible for women to be able to voice the interests of women and the people, while they are not able to voice and fight for themselves? They seem to experience fear and powerlessness in the face of patriarchal hegemony, so what happens is the opposite, they imitate and become "men". The feminine qualities and sensitivity that should be displayed, are actually drowned in masculinity.<sup>34</sup>

This is what is called a "masculinity blunder". Women have lost their own ideological awareness, namely defenders of femininity among the hustle and bustle of men as they wish to follow the steps of the world women's movement, namely feminism. The alignments of these women towards masculinity have weakened femininity, whereas femininity should be strengthened and defended. The defense of femininity can be manifested in sensitivity and concern for weak community groups, including women themselves. In fact, they have placed themselves in a circle of masculinity or a kind of communion with masculinity that makes

<sup>30</sup>Nila Sastrawati, *Laki-Laki Dan Perempuan Identitas Yang Berbeda: Analisis Gender Dan Politik Perspektif Post-Feminisme*, 95.

<sup>31</sup>Yolanda Panjaitan, "Perempuan Masih Hadapi Kendala Dalam Dunia Politik". *UCA News Indonesia*, June 21, 2013. <http://indonesia.ucanews.com/2013/06/21/perempuan-masih-hadapi-kendala-dalam-dunia-politik/>. Fatrawati Kumari, "Perempuan Islam Dalam Politik (Analisis Filsafat Ekofeminisme)", 85.

<sup>32</sup>Fatrawati Kumari, "Perempuan Islam Dalam Politik (Analisis Filsafat Ekofeminisme)", hal. 85.

<sup>33</sup>Ratna Megawangi, *Membiarkan Berbeda? Sudut Pandang Baru Tentang Relasi Gender* (Bandung: Mizan, 1999), 183. Fatrawati Kumari, "Perempuan Islam Dalam Politik (Analisis Filsafat Ekofeminisme)", 86.

<sup>34</sup>Fatrawati Kumari, "Perempuan Islam Dalam Politik (Analisis Filsafat Ekofeminisme)", 86.

the two of them one. Mansour Fakh mentions this condition by borrowing Freire's term as "emphathize to oppressors", namely feeling united or as if feeling the same as oppressors or oppressors of women.<sup>35</sup>

If this situation continues, the involvement of Islamic women in the world of politics in Indonesia will not have any impact on the women who have elected and empowered them as leaders or respectable central figures. Exceptions will occur if these respectable women are able to explore and understand their feminine authenticity as a counterbalance to masculinity that already dominates politics in particular and all areas of life in general. Femininity will lead women to reject all forms of hegemony and single culture. Instead, open up to diversity as a strength, because diversity underlies all activities and on which all life depends.<sup>36</sup>

Diversity that protects and "enlivens" all elements of life is the basis of women's actions and identities. Women with femininity will be able to maintain the sustainability of themselves and their environment, balance the masculinity of the patriarchal system in positioning everything outside of themselves (including the environment and nature) as "other". Femininity does not weaken women, but on the contrary, firmly takes a stand and positions itself on an equal footing with men in a harmonious atmosphere. This method is offered by ecofeminism.<sup>37</sup>

Abbi Gina, one of the editors of the Women's Journal, argues that, in any struggle to protect

<sup>35</sup>Mansour Fakh, *Analisis Gender Dan Transformasi Sosial*, 109–110. Fatrawati Kumari, "Perempuan Islam Dalam Politik (Analisis Filsafat Ekofeminisme)," 86.

<sup>36</sup>Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies, *Ekofeminisme: Perspektif Gerakan Perempuan Dan Lingkungan*, trans. Kelik Ismunanto and Lilik (Yogyakarta: IRE Press, 2005), 189; Kumari, "Perempuan Islam Dalam Politik (Analisis Filsafat Ekofeminisme)," 87.

<sup>37</sup>Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies, *Ekofeminisme: Perspektif Gerakan Perempuan Dan Lingkungan*, 190. See also Alan Watt, *The Tao of Philosophy* (New York: Turtle Publishing, 1995), 24–25. Dikutip dalam Fatrawati Kumari, "Perempuan Islam Dalam Politik (Analisis Filsafat Ekofeminisme)," hal. 87.

nature, it is important for women to be observant of the content of feminization of nature and the naturization of the female body. The struggle of women by emphasizing the element of femininity, must always be questioned and examined. On the one hand, this can be used as a strategy to fight for nature, but on the other hand, it has the potential to re-oppress and domesticate women. Analyzing women with nature must be studied closely. The naturization of the female body has the potential to perpetuate patriarchal sexism and dualism, which hierarchically, dichotomy of femininity-masculinity and nature-culture. Women must be aware of the glorification of the female body and the connectivity of women with nature. Do not let this argument, according to her, perpetuate the patriarchal authority again.<sup>38</sup>

Borrowing the idea of ecofeminism from Karen J. Warren, there are several issues that must be underlined in viewing the oppression of women and nature. *First*, the oppression of women and the domination of nature are basically interrelated. *Second*, ecofeminism must depart from the perspective of feminism. *Third*, solving ecological problems must also challenge the injustices experienced by women in their society. For Warren, the oppressive patriarchal concept must be watched out for. Such a patriarchal conceptual embraces various things, including culture and spirituality. The question is, can it hold and base itself on cultural and religious arguments when it contains and maintains patriarchal ideology? This raise concerns that a struggle of this type will eventually become ambiguous.<sup>39</sup>

According to Gina, for her, this is a serious problem, because women cannot see the problems of women and nature partially. The struggle of

<sup>38</sup>Abbi Gina, "Ekofeminisme: Menyoal Perempuan dan Alam". *Jurnal Perempuan*, August 6, 2017. <https://www.jurnalperempuan.org/blog/ekofeminisme-menyaoal-perempuan-dan-alam>.

<sup>39</sup>Tyas Retno Wulan, "Ekofeminisme Transformatif: Alternatif Kritis Mendekonstruksi Relasi Perempuan Dan Lingkungan", *Sodality: Jurnal Transdisiplin Sosiologi, Komunikasi, Dan Ekologi Manusia* 1, no. 1 (2007): 117–118.



women and nature must be elaborated in order to achieve justice and equality for women, otherwise it will only provide pseudo justice and be used for the struggle of other groups acting in the name of women. The struggle of women by sticking to customs and essentialistic spirituality, does not view women as equals, and in the end, does not see the problem holistically. For feminism, the struggle to protect nature is based on justice for women and the courage to dismantle the patriarchal oppression that still resides there.

Gina then agrees with Warren's view that an ecofeminist must be a feminist. The logic of oppression can only be broken by defending the feminist argument. Feminism is an attempt to fight naturism and essentialism, that is, it seeks to eradicate sexism. This idea becomes important in ecofeminism thinking, because this logic has succeeded in detecting conceptually sexism which intersects with naturism. Do not let women maintain the logic of domination in fighting for nature. Do not let women use the concept of "mother earth" for the sake of patriarchal culture. According to Gina, the struggle for ecofeminism must be consistent and consistent, then only then will it approach justice and equality.<sup>40</sup>

## Conclusion

Women's leadership from an Islamic point of view is still discussed comprehensively in the discourses that are built for women. In the context of the relationship between men and women, there are two areas of roles that are faced, namely the public role or the public sector with the domestic role or the domestic sector. The first term is assumed to be an area of men's self-actualization. Meanwhile, the second term is considered the world of women. This cultural barrier, according to feminists, is a cultural heritage of primitive society which places men as hunters and women as gatherers.

This legacy is then passed on by an agrarian society which places men outside the home (*public*

*sphere*) to manage agriculture and women in the home (*domestic sphere*) to take care of the family. Likewise, in modern society, these cultural barriers still tend to be accommodated, especially in the capitalist system. In fact, the division of labor based on gender like this is not only detrimental to women themselves, but is also very irrelevant to be applied in this modern era of science and technology.

Not a few of the interpretations of women that justify the cultural construction that exists in society. However, not a few of the interpretations of women are cultural constructions built on understanding the scriptures, for example the perspective of the Koran on three main things about women. First, the purpose of the creation of women to complete the needs of men (Adam) in Heaven. This kind of understanding suggests that women are only complements and created to serve the needs of men. Second, woman was created from the rib of man. This kind of analysis impresses subordinate women. Third, women are the cause of the fall of man from heaven to earth.

Men dominate in politics not only as a gender, but also as a mainstream. In other words, patriarchy does not only mean the hegemony of men as gender, but also men as the mainstream; cultural currents; currents of custom or habit; or speed current. Women as "victims" of the patriarchal system feel the effects, such as being treated in a discriminatory manner in which women are belittled, considered incompetent, restricted, and so on. Women have a long experience of the patriarchal system that takes place culturally and structurally, from pre-Islamic, post-Islamic, to the present.

However, when women have had the opportunity to lead, consciously or not, women become very masculine when leading in a government, because masculinity has become a "current" or "trend" that moves whoever sits as a leader. If this situation continues, the involvement of Islamic women in politics will not have any impact on the women who have elected and empowered them as leaders or respectable central

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<sup>40</sup>Abbi Gina, "Ekofeminisme: Menyoal Perempuan Dan Alam".

figures. Exceptions will occur if these respectable women are able to explore and understand their feminine authenticity as a counterbalance to masculinity that already dominates politics in particular and all areas of life in general. Femininity will lead women to reject all forms of hegemony and single culture. Instead, open up to diversity as a strength, because diversity itself underlies all activities and on which all life depends.

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